

The Representation of Islam in E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India*

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ABSTRACT. The paper attempts to trace the ways Islam is represented in Forster's *A Passage to India* to see whether Forster's method of representation is in conformity with preconceived ideas that portray Islam in a negative light or there is an attempt to depart from the norm. The paper argues that Islam, as it existed in India under British rule, is more represented as a culture, required to give individuals a sense of social belonging, rather than a religion that such individuals are bound to practice. The ways Forster deals with various Islamic practices, such as the veil, reveal his views of Islam. He sees the veil as a social convention rather than a religious obligation. He also regards other practices as remnants of the past that do not fit into the present, and for that Aziz eventually has to reject the practicality of Islam. While the novelist traces the fading phases of a practical religion reflected in the diffusion of its adhan and in Forster's imposition of a secular stand, the paper argues that, contrary to Forster's expectation that Islam is dying out, it is becoming more forceful due to the current spirit of revival. The West has to deal with Islam now in a way that differs from the past. That will require a faithful look at methods of representation of Islam by Muslims themselves first and Westerners too. The paper therefore sees correct representation of Islam as one of the means to remove misconceptions, eliminate threat and build bridges of communication between Islam and the West.

Introduction

This paper attempts to shed light on E.M. Forster's conception of Islam in *A Passage to India*. It seeks to trace the different ways Islam is represented as part of a culture and as a religion. Culture in this case refers to the pattern of life within the Indian community¹. It comprises systems of shared ideas, concepts, rules and meanings². The objective behind the exploration of the above is to see whether Forster's representation of Islam is in conformity with stereotypical notions and preconceived ideas which can be traced to the medieval polemic tradition or whether his conceptions show a divorce from the norm and an earnest attempt to understand Islam in a new light away from the prevalent

spirit of hostility and prejudice rooted in crusading literature and the epic romances, when "epic poetry ... from *The Song of Roland* down to the fifteenth century (was) the happy hunting-ground for Saracen"³. Of equal importance to this paper is the contrast made between Forster's views of Islam and the current situation as far as the relationship between Islam and the West stands. The paper addresses a wide range of issues related to certain Islamic practices covering Forster's views of the purdah or the veil, the *adhan*, i.e., the call to prayer, the *Shahada*, i.e., the declaration of faith and the building of tombs outside mosques though the latter is considered as a Muslims' mispractice. This naturally leads us to talk about some of the Mogul emperors mentioned in the novel and their role in spreading Islam and what kind of Islam they encouraged people to follow.

Before we delve into Forster's views of Islam, it may be appropriate to allude briefly to some of the historical factors which were directly responsible for the creating of unfavourable images about Islam. The conflict between Islam and Christianity, the Crusades and millenarianism⁴ are among the factors which led to the association of Muslims with anti-Christian activities, devilish practices and demonically-inspired crimes against Christians. Ever since the rise of Islam, the expansion of Islamic conquests and the annexation of more territories at the expense of losing the glory of the "heavenly thrones" (Byron's *The Giaour*, 64)⁵ had a bearing on the formation of negative pictures of Islam as a militant and an aggressive religion associated with a darkness which "has dawned in the East" (Shelley's *Hellas*, 1023)⁶ and caused the degradation of the Christian West, which saw in the infidels' occupation of Jerusalem the most frustrating and disturbing element of Islam's rapid advance. Consequently, writers like Tasso and Ariosto felt the need to call on Christian princes to unite their powers to confront the aggressive nature of the 'Saracens'. In their call for unity, the above writers of Crusade literature appealed to the emotions and aroused the sentiments. Ariosto, for example, in *Orlando Furioso*⁷ writes that "Christians now, to their undying shame, /Leave (Jerusalem) in the hands of pagans of ill fame" (XVII, 73, 7-8). In stanza 75, the Christians are severely reproached in the following lines:

Why do you leave in dire captivity
Jerusalem, by infidels polluted?
Why do you let the unclean Turk command
Constantinople and the Holy Land?

(5-8)

The first Muslim attack on Constantinople was in 668 A.D., after the Arabs overran Asia Minor from Tarus to Bosphorus. By 711, Arabs had already advanced through Spain. The Roman Catholic Church was aware of the increasing power of the sole enemy of Christendom from the time of its rise, and more precisely "from the death of the prophet in 632 to the collapse of the last Ottoman offensive before Vienna in 1632". Thus M.W. Baldwin concludes that "for nearly a thousand years ... Christendom, or at least important sections of it, was forced to deal with the menace of a hostile Islamic world"⁸. Can those thousand years like the *Thousand Nights* be sent into oblivion or are they to remain fresh in the Western mind even until modern times? Before we seek to

answer this question, we need to investigate the various methods employed by Forster in representing Islam.

Symbols of Islam: Mosque & Purdah

The first contact we have with Islam in the novel is through one of its most and powerful symbols of greatness: the mosque. It provides Aziz with a sense of tradition and an ancient past and accounts for a feeling of security and strength inside a place of worship that offers him more than just a shelter and a rest from physical fatigue. A contrast is drawn between the effects of the mosque and a temple on Aziz:

The temple of another creed, Hindu, Christian, or Greek, would have bored him and failed to awaken his sense of beauty. Here was Islam, his own country, more than a Faith, more than a battlecry, more, much more ... Islam, an attitude towards life both exquisite and durable, where his body and his thoughts found their home (p. 20)⁹.

Thus Aziz finds himself placed in a natural environment that gives rise to cultural strength and turns upside down the position of the weak. What we see in the scene is a reversal in the scale of the relationship between the superior and inferior, the strong and the weak, the oppressor and oppressed. Aziz ascends to fill the space of the strong while the Westerner is relegated to take up the lot of the defenceless under the authority and hegemony of the appropriator of the role of the powerful. The harmony he experiences should be contrasted with Mrs. Moore's initial sense of dislocation inside a place from which she is naturally excluded just as Indians are not permitted into the club where they do not belong. The mosque sets up a boundary, a demarcation with segregates people of different cultures just as the purdah lowers down a partition between what is permissible and not permissible to be seen. When Aziz shows Fielding his dead wife's photograph, he removes the physical purdah that creates a barrier toward understanding and creation of mutual brotherly affection. It is an attempt to bridge gaps, establish friendly ties and become intimate with Fielding. Aziz's belief in the purdah is shattered when he relates its necessity or application to a social convention rather than a religious obligation.

According to Aziz, "as soon as one behaves as (a brother) he may see (his) wife (p. 114) and consequently the purdah will have to be dropped. Fielding's gaze into the photograph symbolizes the destruction of a barrier that sets the European aside from a private scene into which he has no right to intrude¹⁰. Aziz allows him to enter, if not trespass, into that region which excludes aliens. Aziz demolishes the distance between the private and the public¹¹ and by showing the photograph to Fielding, the distinction that Islam sets up between the two through the creation of the veil or purdah is demolished. What breaks down that barrier or obstacle between what can and what can not be viewed is Aziz's justification that brothers in Islam are allowed to see Mahareem¹², *i.e.*, relatives who are not excluded behind the purdah but permitted to see ladies as they normally appear without the restrictions of Hijab. His interpretation of the word 'brother' is not in the literal Qur'anic sense but is motivated by bitter feelings of disappointments over what colonial authority has created. The feelings of racial discrimination and the artificial classifications among ruler and ruled and the psychological imbalance and frus-

tration that follow make it almost impossible for any friendly ties to be established¹³. While the purdah is a religious institution that isolates two opposed worlds from each other, a similar partition or veil is constructed mentally to separate people of different cultures from each other. The differences which exist in the social system of stratification invented by British authority widen the gaps between colonizer and colonized and make an attempt at a reconciliation or an achievement of an understanding an impossibility. This becomes the most difficult of all 'purdahs' to knock down. Aziz's purdah is easily done away with in the presence of a brother whether in terms of blood relations enumerated in the *Qur'an* as close relatives in front of whom purdah is no longer needed or in the broad sense of a brother who feels for others and shares their miseries. Out of nostalgic feelings for the destruction of the artificial differences which colonial authority has created as this is evidenced in discriminations among various classes in Indian society that the British have imposed, Aziz breaks down what is more accessible and close at hand. His destruction of the Islamic tradition comes to symbolize a hidden frustrating desire to demolish an impregnable system that sets boundaries and thwarts attempts at communication. While the purdah symbolizes the rigidity of Islam for Aziz, he comes to link it later on with anything that frustrates liberation and hampers the creation of an independent nation. In Mau, where Aziz manages to "escape from the English" (p. 288), he thinks about the topic for his future poems:

Oriental womanhood. 'The purdah must go' was their burden, 'or we shall never be free.' And he declared (fantastically) that India would not have been conquered if women as well as men had fought at Plassey. 'But we do not show our women to the foreigner' - (p. 289).

The victory of Plassey in 1757 laid the foundation of British supremacy in India. If women had participated in the battle, the British would not have conquered India. Thus Aziz sees independence and an assertion of power demonstrated in throwing away the yoke of servitude to the West in terms of rebelling against rigid and binding religious traditions that hinder movement, thwart change and impede progress. While Fielding can travel light, Aziz "himself was rooted in society and Islam. He belonged to a tradition which bound him" (p. 118). He has to conform to certain social norms and among them are arranged Islamic marriages¹⁴. Though Aziz (was)

touched by Western feelings, he disliked union with a woman whom he had never seen; moreover, when he did see her, she disappointed him, and he begat his first child in mere bestiality. The change began after its birth. He was won by her love for him, by a loyalty that implied something more than submission, and by her efforts to educate herself against that lifting of the purdah that would come in the next generation if not in theirs (p. 55).

This is a stereotypical image of a submissive, naive and conservative woman in Islam who resists change and fights against modernity and what it may bring at the expense of losing the Islamic dress and all the goodness it means to an obedient and religious lady once exposed out of the safe shelter, the protected harbour of the veil. But as the quotation stresses, social change is bound to win over conservatism. But that does not necessarily mean that it will happen. While the veil is considered as a religious obligation, Forster presents it more as a social convention. It is a remnant of the past that gives Aziz a dosage of spiritual uplifting reflected in the kind of poetry he recites and the great Islamic history with all its heroic and splendid achievements that he reminisces over.

While the themes which Aziz prefers for his poetry are "the decay of Islam and the brevity of love" (p. 16), we see Aziz revolting against the traditional role of literature in Islamic society because the kind of poetry he recites is sentimental and it confirms the weakness of Muslims who can only indulge in past memories to escape from painful present realities and possibly the "culturally collusive present" of Bhabha (*LOC*, p. 9). When Aziz recites Ghalib in the company of his friends who come to visit him when he is shamming, the congregation is "overwhelmed by its pathos; pathos, they agreed, is the highest quality in art". Forster's ironic remark that "a poem should touch the hearer with a sense of his own weakness, and should institute some comparison between mankind and flowers" (p. 102) comments on the traditional role of poetry in Islamic culture where poets are inclined to divorce themselves from present decadence by too much immersion into the ancient past. The romantic world of 'bulbuls' (*i.e.*, nightingale) and the emotional language of lofty poetry "voiced (Muslims') loneliness nevertheless, our isolation, our need for the Friend who never comes yet is not entirely disproved" (p. 103). When Aziz is confronted with the bitter present reality of suffering racial discrimination in the trial, he changes his view of what role poetry should play in people's lives. After his acquittal, he meditates over the kind of language that he will choose to fit the new vein of poetry he intends to write. Thus

He vowed to see more Indians who were not Mohammedans, and never to look backward. It is the only healthy course. Of what help, in this latitude and hour, are the glories of Cordova and Samarcand? They have gone, and while we lament them the English occupy Delhi and exclude us from East Africa. Islam itself, though true, throws cross-light over the path of freedom. The song of the future must transcend creed (p. 261).

In the light of the quotation above, Islam is represented as a religion that looks back at past glories while failing to cope with the present. In his earnest attempt to relate to the contemporary scene where he feels that he has been marginalized because his Islamic thoughts lead only to the past that he must free himself from, Aziz turns to the current issues that poetry must handle if it is to play a decisive role in the present. Islam cannot endow Aziz with a spirit that allows him to find a fitting role in the modern scene. He therefore rejects it as a religion in that it does not harmonize with the present. He may not reject it as part of a culture, but in its removal from the arena of contemporary affairs, Islam as a religion is kept within the premises of the mosque where Aziz first experienced cultural strength and exercised hegemony in his confrontation with Mrs. More. According to Forster, Islam has lost vitality and appeal beyond the prayer-mat and ablution tank. For that Aziz rebels and seeks to liberate himself from it. He also rebels against the veil that must be done away with for the same reason. It belongs to a tradition that finds itself out of tune with modern times. It is interesting that Hamidullah's suggestion of a topic for a poem comes immediately and in the same chapter where Aziz revolts against the traditional role of poetry as if a rebellion against the *pardah* is strongly affiliated with a rebellion against a religion that he perceives to be opposed to change. Thus Hamidullah suggests writing about "The Indian lady as she is and not as she is supposed to be". If that were to be done, we would return to the previous stereotyped picture of Aziz's wife. Hamidullah draws a picture of the same lady with whom "for fifteen years, my dear boy, (has he) argued ... and never gained a point,

yet the missionaries inform us our women are downtrodden" (p. 264). Thus women are reluctant to change their old inherited religious beliefs and social customs. The missionaries' views confirm Islam's subjugation of women through the symbol of the veil.

But the Indian society as Forster observes, is also responsible for the oppression of women. Ladies come second or last in everything. In the introductory dinner scene, Hamidullah Begum has to wait for the men to finish their meal before "she would begin hers, and consequently prolonged her remarks in case they should suppose she was impatient" (p. 15). While Hamidullah Begum tries strenuously to convince Aziz that polygamy is justifiable as it is for the good of women who are not denied the pleasures and "joys God had intended (them) to receive" (p. 16), Aziz keeps to his view that "One is enough" (p. 15) though women keep him dreaming of going to Calcutta to enjoy licentious relations in a brothel-house (p. 98). We see Aziz torn between two polar opposites: acceptance of a promiscuous institution that allows more than one relationship with one woman but in a very binding and organized manner and a rejection of the above because of its restrictions. He rejects polygamy on an official level only to dream of its practice in the manner of Westerners behind closed doors. He unites both the Western mentality which seeks a liberation from restrictions in indulgence in sexual relations and the "licentious Oriental imagination" (p. 267) that works as an evidence against him which he is more than likely not to have spared an English lady as the photographs taken out of his drawers prove that he keeps a lady's picture and as the contents of 'Aziz' pocket-case are not "edifying" (p. 166). It is also established during the trial that colored people or "darker races are physically attracted by the fairer, but not vice versa" (p. 213). Aziz is caught by the 'pull' and 'push' factors of an Islamic institution¹⁵. Like the civilized European who can give his heart to only one, he rejects polygamy, but following the Westerner's steps, he does not mind having a 'Harem' or a 'Turkish seraglio'¹⁶ if only he could get away with it and if his boss, Major Callendar, would allow him "to spend an evening with some girls, singing and all that, the vague jollity that would culminate in voluptuousness" (p. 98). The same girls occupy his mind as he discusses the widow with his English guests in Fielding's house. What lies in the back of his mind speaks of a frustrated sexual desire he seeks to release when he says "'and in the evening, we will give a great banquet with a nautch and lovely girls shall shine on every side of the tank with fireworks in their hands and all shall be feasting and happiness until the next day" (p. 70). The preoccupation of Aziz's mind with women becomes an obsession. Like a person who is frustrated in dreams, such dreams point to a reality that the subconscious mind suppresses when awake. Dreams become the vehicle through which such frustrations are given vent or release¹⁷.

An Identity Crisis

Aziz is torn between desire and restriction. Simultaneously, Aziz attempts to liberate himself from a tradition that almost paralyses his movement or mesmerizes him in the past. He is torn between a feeling of security he derives out of a sense of belonging to an ancient tradition that he "liked to hear (his religion) praised" in stark contrast to the tirade against Hindus as 'a source of infection' (p. 102) on one hand and a hidden desire

or, to borrow Bhabha's phrase "interdictory desire" (*LOC*, p. 89), to rid himself of the cuffs of antiquity to be able to live in the present. Aziz faces an identity crisis that splits him into two. Such a crisis is experienced by many Muslims exposed to Western culture as they are never immune to its disastrous effects. Halliday, for example, exposes the fragmentation that occurs within Islam due to vital changes in perspectives that accompany emigration. the inevitable result of such changes is that Muslims in the West particularly the young "have multiple identities"¹⁸. A Muslim scholar like Nadwi voices the same concern as Halliday when he says that

Islam cannot assimilate ideas and institutions which are alien to it, obviously the dangers for those who live in an un-Islamic environment, like those living in Europe and America are serious. They are constantly in danger of being lost in the sea of an alien culture. Their Islamic identity is always susceptible to changes¹⁹.

Aziz's identity faces a similar crisis. We see his mental transformation from a Muslim into a Westener in the course of the novel. Probably Bhabha's remark is worth noting that the most difficult time for any people to formulate an independent identity away from external pressures comes at the time of liberation. No wonder Aziz becomes very concerned with a new role for poetry rather than poetry of ancient times and themes. He rejects the latter in favour of the former because it relates to contemporary issues while the poetry of antiquity is more related to a past that does not harmonize with the present and possibly connected to an impractical religion. Thus Bhabha says:

The time of liberation is, as Fanon powerfully evokes, a time of cultural uncertainty, of signification or representational undecidability ... the constant principles (of national art) which acted as safeguards during the colonial period are now undergoing extremely radical changes (*LOC*, p. 35).

We observe such changes in Aziz's personality. He is both attracted to Islam as a culture which gives him a sense of identity that he needs only to distinguish himself from others on one hand but he also rejects certain practices in Islam that hinder movement and keep everything fastened to the past on the other. Thus he fights against the rigid aspects of the religion. He recites the poetry that recounts the glory of Islam. Hence the poetry of Hafiz, Ghalib and Iqbal are pleasant to memorize. He and his circle of friends "regained their departed greatness by hearing its departure lamented" (p. 17). But this kind of poetry does not relate to current issues. It belongs to by-gone times that can never be retrieved. It deepens his sense of a loss of control over the present and therefore he finds himself dislocated or culturally displaced like all other inferior or weaker nations. Thus this kind of poetry and all it stands for should be sent to the archives of the ancients. Aziz ends rejecting those aspects of Islam that tie it with a system that does not function in the present. For that reason, Aziz is forced to search for an alternative. He finds it in the motivation he feels for writing the kind of poetry that creates feelings of nationalism and go beyond issues related to faith. For that he must attempt to love India for "not until she is a nation will her sons be treated with respect" (p. 262). Aziz can achieve this by expressing "what is deepest in (his) heart" (p. 263). This is an element without which poetry can never be written. It is also the same element that he needs to build relations with others. He feels most secure and powerful to build them inside the mosque.

Reuben A. Brower comments on the scene in the mosque where Aziz and Mrs. Moore had their first contact. He says that "the mosque comes to symbolize the possibility of a communication between Britons and Indians, and more generally the possibility of understanding relationships between any two persons"²⁰. Shahane draws the contrast between the successful achievement in the mosque and the failure of the Bridge Party as the mosque "aims at bringing about a sense of unity and equality and partly succeeds in it"²¹. The experience in the mosque brings Aziz to that soaring feeling of excitement and strength that the mere presence in the house of Allah entails and that feeling accounts for a spiritual uplifting and ascent, similar to that which comes with poetic inspiration where he rises to sublime thoughts and feels the connection with the great Mogul emperors and also justifies the feeling of superiority that explains his outburst at Mrs. Moore and gives rise to a religious fervor. Consequently, Aziz feels the greatness of Islam and that balances the feelings of dejection and despair experienced earlier when the Major snubs him. There, in a secure place, he has a sense of belonging comparable to what he has experienced in the company of his friends in Hamidullah's house. But such a mood of gaiety and cheerfulness and a sense of connection with intimate friends are shattered once the Major humiliates Aziz. Inside the mosque, he is able psychologically to leap over a point in time the desperate and downtrodden may be inclined to shun or brush aside only to regain a sense of connection with another though remoter point in time they feel most comfortable with.

Aziz's subconscious mind in the mosque tramples over a more immediate moment in terms of clock time in order to retreat to a remoter moment in psychological time only because he chooses to evade the unpleasant present of racial prejudice and hostility and to make a trip inside the deep recesses of his mind to feel the affiliation with a more favourable moment in the past not necessarily because his mind makes the association with the topic of discussion at that time in Hamidullah's house but due to amiable feelings of being in the company of close friends which create instinctive happy sensations that his expected call on the Major, who is an enemy, certainly expels and causes to evaporate. No wonder he suppresses that moment that springs up later on, but inside the mosque where he can shout at an alien intruder, it is kept under a vigilant eye. Aziz's wish to turn the recent incident of degradation into oblivion is the way the Oriental mind operates to shun the painful present and retreat to the pleasant past. Muslims nowadays dream of past glories to make up for failure in the decadent present. Aziz's initial experience of wanting to jump over the present only to enjoy the security of the past can explain why the past is so essential for Islam. Aziz has no choice but to retreat to that past because the 'Knouter' is waiting with his whip stretched at full length in an expectancy of his getting out of his cave where he feels like a hermit most secure and well-protected for he is in the house of Allah after all.

A Sacred Or a Desecrated Place!

In the history of Islam, even outlaws and criminals cannot be followed across the threshold of the mosque. When the prophet entered Makkah victorious in Ramadan in the year 7 A.H., he is reported to have said:

He who takes refuge in Abu Sufyan's house is safe; whosoever confines himself to his house, the inmates thereof shall be in safety, and he who enters the Sacred Mosque is safe ²².

The sanctity of the mosque and similar holy places should therefore be observed. Once even criminals are in, no power on earth, be it that of the Oriental despot or Western arrogant can drive them out. The Westerner who claims to be a torch-bearer wants to have complete freedom to move wherever he likes. He desires to unravel the aura of mystery that shrouds the inaccessible Orient. The purdah and at times a hostile environment constrain his movement and force him to lower his gaze. The veil places a wall in front of which he stands puzzled as he is excluded from admission into a private feminine world. Thus he seeks to break the barrier and intrude into the secluded region he is prohibited to enter. He aims at moving in everywhere on God's free land, be it Africa, India or even Makkah, which is never to be mentioned in an assembly of the faithful in connection with a Kafir (unbeliever) daring to get close unless he exposes his life to an inevitable fate. One wonders what would have happened to Fielding had he happened to be in the mosque and not in the club. Would the vicious Turton have dared to kick him out! Aziz's feelings of belonging in the mosque have their parallel in the feelings of connection he enjoys in the company of his people who belong to the same race. In fact, such strong feeling stem out of his Islamic faith because Islam is a social religion that derives power from gatherings and collective communal acts as the term applies to a group of people who share common practices and habits and who feel dependent on each other²³. The social link that constantly weaves Indians, particularly Muslims, together is distinctive feature of an Islamic society. The British attempt to break it apart as "Caste 'or something of the sort' would prevent" (p. 54) Muslims from forming such a solid bond. Thus a Muslim has to be part of a group or a large social circle in order to feel unity and power particularly in India where a consolidated front is required to oppose foreign rule. The fact that Aziz skips a point in time is therefore understandable and justifiable on grounds of instinctive feelings of repulsion over the aftermath of the preceding unpleasant incident with the Major. Thus it is the cruelty, inhumanity, carelessness and utter nonchalance of the insensitive West that forces the Islamic world to retreat into the safe shelter of the heroic past when Islamic domination posed a real threat to Europe.

In retreating to the mosque, Aziz in fact is fleeing for his life from the grip of the tyrant who, if he manages to catch his quarry alive, he will never set him free. It is therefore better to run and shun regardless of the direction the escapee is heading. If he were to seek shelter in a cave, the cave will expel the intruder by virtue of the hidden power inherent in the hostile Indian land. If he were to find protection in the mosque or better still, make *I'tikaaf* (religious term describing the condition of a recluse who shuns active life for the pleasure of the pursuit of the contemplative life leading to eternal happiness in paradise) and stay there in a safe haven, would a Turton or Burton or Callendar dare get any close, unless any of the three is reckless enough to sell his life that cheap to a Muslim? How come that the Westerner violates the sanctity of places of worship and of such a holy Islamic shrine! The British are then caught in a dilemma. How can they *handle the case*? They are cornered into a stance where emotions are with the British but sound judgement should be in favour of the Muslim. But eventually, it turns out that the

British have to express disapproval not of the real criminal who has trespassed into the shrine, but rather they express indignation, in case of an attack by the Muslim side, at the militant aspects of Islam when in fact Muslims retaliate for grievances. They are made to appear as if they launch attacks on innocent victims to throw them into a bad light. The contemporary scene is a witness of this very fact. As an example, when the massacre took place in Hebron mosque in Ramadan 1414 H. corresponding to February 1994 and the victims were Palestinians, the West changes perspectives. Here it does not side with the victims as expected, but ironically with the aggressor. Muhammad Sid Ahmed, an Egyptian journalist, comments on Western double perspectives and concludes that such a policy is clearly evident in "enforcing UN resolutions against a Muslim state". But "when UN resolutions are on behalf of Muslims, they carry little more weight than the paper they are printed on"²⁴. Muslims are therefore disappointed over the unjust ways Western policies are conducted. They feel that they are continuously being 'shafted' and victimized by the West. In the above example where the sanctity of the Hebron Mosque has been violated, the West comes to play the role of the pacifier who preaches an exercise of self-discipline for the aggressor and the oppressed. What an injustice! The sanctity that Islam has given to a mosque is most gruesomely violated to allow Muslims to be caught utterly defenceless in the pre-dawn prayer²⁵.

Foster draws such a picture of the believers in complete freedom and full security not due to the efforts of peace-keeping forces but rather owing to the inward serenity believers feel when facing Makkah, where the Sacred House of Allah known as Ka'aba, is situated. There "a few of (Aziz's) co-religionist had come to the Maidan, and were praying with their faces towards Mecca" (p. 58). Aziz does not join them which once more confirms the argument that Islam for Aziz exists as part of a culture and not as a practiced religion. He needs it to feel connected to a tradition and feel a sense of security derived from a stable source that gives the back-up required not to lose a distinct identity. But as a religion that governs daily life and regulates man's affairs, Aziz seems to have given hope in its applicability or practicality. It hovers back to ancient customs and obsolete traditions that do not fit into the modern scene. The previous description of believers offering regular prayer in congregation shows that the mosque is not needed for religious ceremony. Any clean place is good enough to perform prayers be it on board a ship or in an aeroplane. This confirms a tradition by prophet Muhammad that he has been given five distinctive attributes that no prophet before him has been assigned. Among them is that any land, as long as it is clean, is just as good as an established mosque for prayer which is not restricted to a purpose-built mosque²⁶. By raising formal restrictions on specific worship areas that followers of other religions are strict to observe, Islam invades a larger slice of society. Even in the West now the sight of a Muslim or a group of Muslims in Regent's Park or any other turning to Makkah in devotion and contemplation is not as unusual as it used to be.

The West is exposed to Islam in that way and the prayer comes to symbolize the call to a practical and spiritual religion. The fact that Forster pays attention to such minute details is evidence that the prayer with its serenity and meditation commands attention. The inquisitive eye of the Westerner surveys and reports everything like the lens of a

camera which sees without being seen. It does not escape Western observation that Muslims perform five daily prayers because such religious rites are practiced in the open Maidan. Ironically, what is depicted by the West and seen by Forster as a dead religion turns out to be the most lively and most practical because it is not kept behind doors like Muslim women hidden from sight and seen through bars in M. Alloula's *Colonial Harem*²⁷. Thus Islam gives its rituals a taint of practicality by allowing the West to view and scrutinize them. An external application of Islam functions as an impressive method that sends the message that Islam is a peaceful and spiritual religion that connects man with his Créator anywhere and everywhere without the artificial need for bricks or holy men or Hindu 'saddhus'. All that is needed is a clean piece of land enough to stretch the limbs in meekness in front of Allah and nothing more of a ceremonial nature is required. This is the simplicity and practicality of a faith that remains a mystery for many Westerners. This may explain why Mrs. Moore feels a bit shaky and tense as she enters a place she knows in the bottom of her heart that she has no right to enter and also one in which she cannot attune herself. Aziz is in command and in a position of power.

But unfortunately, the mosque at certain times and places, as has already been mentioned, can only offer a limited retreat or protection. One is not as immune in it as one should be even though a criminal cannot be dragged out of a mosque since he is under the protection of the roof of the House of Allah. The feeling of security where the mosque works as a haven cannot be kept forever as the boiling external strife puts too much pressure on its dilapidated walls [for the mosque is entered "through a ruined gate" and "the courtyard was paved with broken slabs" (p. 20) till they can not hold out any more and as they eventually collapse, they allow the external world with all its severity, agitation and violence to intrude upon the scene till all feelings of security are utterly dispersed. Thus the mosque proves to be a fragile construction that cannot offer everlasting security for its visitors. Consequently, Aziz is bound to come out of his hiding-place which offers a temporary asylum from the racial prejudice and injustice he sees everywhere his eyes turn. The retreat into Mau or the mosque has to end because an active participation in the conflict in India is a necessity particularly for the educated intellectuals who fight for freedom and pose a threat to colonial authority in front of which in the past, "they used to cringe, but the younger generation believe in a show of manly independence" (p. 33). Consequently, they are dragged into the political struggle.

The mosque is further linked with muddle and unclarity. It stands in stark contrast to "Italian churches" (p. 275) and the beautiful architectural design observed in European buildings where there is complete "harmony between the works of man and the earth that upholds them". (p. 275). As Fielding leaves India, he reflects on his whole experience in an alien land and its impact on him. He says:

Everything echoes now; there is no stopping the echo. The original sound may be harmless, but the echo is always evil. This reflection about an echo lay at the verge of Fielding's mind. He could never develop it. It belonged to the universe that he had missed or rejected. And the mosque missed it too. Like himself, those shallow arcades provided but a limited asylum. 'There is no God but God' does not carry us far through the complexities of matter and spirit; it is only a game with words, really, a religious pun, not a religious truth (p. 269).

The quotation makes it clear that Fielding on his way home leaves the muddle and confusion behind represented both by the evil echo of the caves and the elusiveness of the call for prayers emanating from the high minarets of the mosque distinguished for its fragility, insubstantiality and lack of beauty. Such a beauty intrigues the European who finds in cathedrals the finished touch and delicate harmony. Once more the shelter offered by the arcades of the mosque is momentary. The mosque can not stand on its own away from the encompassing struggle and prevalent conflict. Fielding's experience in India links him with Mrs. Moore's as she too fails to comprehend the real mystery imbedded in the natural Indian landscape and as the palm-trees wave a mocking farewell to her for having thought that the "echo was India" (p. 205).

Fielding's Rejection of India

The fact that the quotation says that Fielding's reflection "about the echo lay at the verge of (his) mind" as "He could never develop it (since) it belonged to the universe that he had missed and rejected" (p. 269) points to two important things: first, at this stage Fielding is once more brought to side with the English to some extent, for if he rejects the above muddle caused by the echo, he must change sides to let things run their more natural and normal course which leads him to be deposited on the English side. This is evident from the private correspondence between him and Ronny that Aziz comes across in his "inquisitive, and malicious" search in Fielding's private room in the European Guest House (p. 302). Second, the quotation pays equal attention to what Fielding has missed as if his experience does not reap all its desired fruits. In his rejection of India, Fielding ends on the British side as the private correspondence illustrates. This confirms that the British, unlike Arabs and other Oriental nations, know when they have to bury their ill-feelings toward each other, when to overlook differences in order to appear united and when to put public duty above personal affairs especially at times that require a disregard of petty insignificant matters for ones of a heavier import.

Ronny therefore addresses the same Fielding who refuses to stand for him in chapter 20 (p. 185) as follows in the private letter: "I'm relieved you feel able to come into line with the *Oppressors* of India to some extent. We need all the support we can get." Besides its being a confessional, and yet a confidential letter that throws off the mask that covers up Ronny's outburst at his mother, in chapter 5, that they (the British) are in India for something more important to do which is "to do justice and keep the peace" (p. 49) as the above letter contradicts such a claim since it describes the British as the 'Oppressors'. The letter may be seen as a probe into the subconscious by virtue of its being written in secrecy which naturally excludes discovery of its contents unless "the sanctity of private correspondence (that) has never been ratified by the East" (p. 302) allows Aziz to throw out its secret contents out in a way that gives an inside picture of what is hidden. But Aziz here pays the British back as McBryde previously goes "through the contents" (p. 166) of 'Aziz' pocket case' and while he sends "a faint, incredulous smile" as he "started rummaging in the drawer" to think that the found picture is an evidence of licentiousness when Fielding comes to Aziz's defence and says "that's his wife" (p. 169) as Aziz has shown him the photograph before. So what we have here is Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* but unfortunately, it is the one who reacts to injustice,

and not the one who initiates it, who is to be blamed and punished.

Returning to the letter, it shows how British people can quickly forget animosities and any malevolent feelings. They are willing to ignore them for the sake of protecting their strength and interests. They try to appear cordial and restore amicable relationships which promptly heal up any past injuries. Thus Aziz realizes why the British are strong: "These five people were making up their little difficulties, and closing their broken ranks against the alien. Even Heaslop was coming in. Hence the *strength* of England," (p. 303) and by contrast, the *weakness* of the Islamic world, because of failure to use common sense and apply the Qur'anic verse "to hold fast, all together, by the Rope which God (stretches out), and not to be divided" (III, 103). It is this realization that causes Aziz "in a spurt of temper to hit the piano" in frustration and anger.

Fielding therefore ends up on the side of the British. Early in the novel, we are aware of the initial difficulty Fielding faces due to his peers' unjust treatment of Indians and consequently, he is led to side with the Oppressed though he attempts to "slink through India unlabelled" (p. 172). But in coming to terms with Ronny and in spite of the ill-feeling that existed between the two antithetical characters as they have different temperaments, views and objectives behind their stay in India, it is beyond doubt that eventually Fielding favours the Western way of life over the Oriental with all its clutter, muddle and unclarity reinforced through the symbolism of the cave and echo. That accounts for his rejection of India and all it stands for. In numerous other examples, the demarcation between East and West is immediately felt as the ship goes through the Suez canal where "there is always a social change: the arrangements of Asia weaken and those of Europe begin to be felt even in terms of the remarkable change of weather as it is reported that "At Port Said the grey blustery north began" (p. 249). When Adela leaves for England, again the change in weather and atmosphere are felt with Egypt where "the clean sands, heaped on each side of the canal, seemed to wipe off everything that was difficult and equivocal, and even Port Said looked pure and charming in the light of a rose-grey morning" (p. 258).

The foregoing quotations confirm the early point that Fielding rejects India and feels the great relief that he has turned his back to a universe characterized by muddle while he heads for another distinguished by its clarity. But Fielding's reflection on the meaning of the echo leaves him in a position where he realizes that it "belonged to the universe that he had missed or rejected" (p. 269). As has already been mentioned, his rejection of it confirms that eventually he comes to side with his peers and to favour the European clarity and definitiveness to Eastern confusion and lack of clarity. But how can it be explained that there is something else that he has missed in India! Thus the quotation serves a double purpose: it indicates that Fielding rejects the confusion of India in favour of his own culture, but still, the quotation points out that Fielding has missed something out as if India remains beyond his capacity to understand all of its mysteries. Like Mrs. Moore who has only seen the caves and thus feels she has seen India as if she "took the Marabar caves as final?" (p. 205) when in fact the beauty and splendour of Asirgarh and other places have escaped her as she passes by them on her train journey to Bombay where the leaves of coconut palm trees wave her a mocking

farewell, similarly, it can be concluded that India keeps her own treasures away from inquisitive European eyes and therefore certain secrets are inaccessible to the European mind which thinks that everything is open to inspection when in fact, the mystery of the land defeats the European imagination.

Meaning & Impact of Adhan

Fielding's reflection on his experience in India is incomplete without a reference to the meaning and the impact on him of the *adhan*, the call for prayer. Going back to Fielding's reflections as he leaves India, it is obvious that Fielding connects the *adhan*, strangely enough, with the Indian echo and its devastating and penetrating influence that has done Adela and Mrs. Moore so much harm. One possible reason why the *adhan* is connected with the echo is its vibration in the air. Probably the same quotation is best analyzed in conjunction with the following to get a clearer meaning. In chapter 35 which begins with the legend of the two shrines of the Head and the Body of the saint who offers his life as a sacrifice for the freedom of prisoners, Forster has this to say on the meaning of the *adhan* which is also part of the declaration of faith: "'There is no God but God'" that symmetrical injunction ... (that) belongs to pilgrimages and universities, not to feudalism and agriculture" (p. 292). The two quotations studied together establish the fact that the words reiterated in the call for prayers which attest to the dividing line between Muslims and non-Muslims are ambiguous, incomprehensible and utterly meaningless to the Western mentality that sees it in poetic terms as another game with words. This may explain why the West fails to understand Islam for the simple reason that the words by which any person becomes a Muslim are a mystery themselves beyond European comprehension. Bhabha shows that there are things that certain people can only understand in a particular context and in their own language. But they remain almost impossible to translate beyond a private circle because "the migrant culture of the 'in-between', the minority position, dramatizes the activity of culture's untranslatability" (LOC, p. 224).

To illustrate the point that certain matters are only understood within a particular context and within the limits of a certain culture, a reference is made to the Nawab Bahadur's car accident while Ronny and Adela accompany him for the night ride. The Nawab Bahadur is so distressed by the accident that he is visited by the past. But he can only communicate his feelings particularly in matters related to traditions and ancient beliefs in superstitions and magic within a limited circle of people who share his views and get a sense of what he is trying to say. Thus races are distinct and some experiences can not be shared with others. They need the privacy of their own race to get the message across because "it was a racial secret communicable more by blood than speech" (p. 96). One may convincingly argue that Muslims themselves are partly to blame for the erroneous translation of the meaning of the most important pillar of Islam. It is translated too literally so that it fails to communicate fully. It cannot reach a larger audience and hence it remains only comprehensible within a narrow circle. The way it is translated is indeed puzzling, confusing, contradictory and muddled up like the whole Indian experience and environment where nothing is definite or clear. Things are left vague and

inexplicable without giving a satisfactory and convincing answer to the mysteries involved. We are confronted here with terminologies too mysterious to explain in simple language. Such mysteries found in the writings of the ancients are equated by Sir John Harrington in his preface to the translation of *Orlando Furioso* referred to in the introduction with the figurative meanings found in the allegory that

the ancient poets have indeed wrapped ... in their writings diverse and sundry meanings, which they call the ... mysteries thereof ... that comprehend so excellent knowledge we call the Allegorie²⁸.

Murrin in *The Veil of Allegory* defines allegory as something that

can be described as a figure of speech, complete in itself, which, for this reason, makes certain demands on an audience. The hearer by analogy must fill in the proper meaning to complete the figure. It follows that allegorical figures presuppose a certain cooperation between a speaker and an auditor: the former makes a statement and the latter completes it by his interpretation²⁹.

The reader is therefore expected to arrive at an understanding of the hidden meaning behind the literal surface. Since the translation of the declaration of faith is too literal, an understanding of the deeper meaning behind what Forster sees as a symmetrical arrangement of mere words is required. This may explain why Islam remains obscure in spite of its apparent simplicity. The repetition of the words of the *adhan* as it is rendered in English is naive and incomprehensible. The translation, as it is fails to let the deep religious meaning of the words of the *adhan* get across, can be regarded as one form of suppression in the sense that the simple meaning of the declaration of faith is kept obscure. By committing the grave and unpardonable sin of misrepresentation of such crucial and vital words, Muslims have not represented Islam accurately. Hence the purity of Islam is tarnished and confused by such an erroneous literal and naive translation of words when it can take the whole life of a Muslim to comprehend the enormous volumes of excellent scholarly works that expound, explain and elaborate on the same words. One therefore wonders how a few translated words could carry such a huge weight of knowledge and how the Muslim scholar would be expected to render in few words and in haste the declaration of faith and on a small piece of paper or a pamphlet when the hidden treasures of the ancient scholars explain them profusely and abundantly in volume after volume! How could one imagine the whole wisdom of the ancients to be compressed into mere incomprehensible words as they seem so to the West! How could one be imagined to digest the profound and unfathomable knowledge of any field be it medicine or rhetoric eventually contracted into a single page! How could such allegorical meanings of a deeply-religious Truth, lodged in the mouths of the most discreet, be reduced into a few words! It is therefore utterly unacceptable to the West to present Islam as if it were a small tablet or a dosage that the spiritually sick can take when strenuous efforts are really needed to explain it convincingly and brilliantly. Here lies a problem of what may be titled the failure of 'the rhetoric of Otherness'. It refers to the failure of certain words put in a religious context and related to religious Truth to reach the heart of the distant Other. As the mistake lies in the translation's failure to draw in the Western mind the same religious concept with its deep meaning that exists in its Islamic counterpart, the mere symmetrical arrangement of words or the religious pun of Foster is beyond comprehension.

To expect the Western mentality to understand the declaration of faith in the same way Muslims digest it is like asking for impossible feats that require utmost intrepidity from the utterly powerless such as the crippled or infants. To achieve the Islamic objective, Islamic terminology has to have the linguistic power to let the garb that clothe the Western word fall away to allow the Islamic interpretation of certain terms to come about. Muslims may be at fault as they deprive the Islamic voice of a chance to be heard and correctly represented. They keep it behind a Western mask and conceal its identity in a Western dress. Only by a process of sloughing off can the artificial coverings and outer garments, which are Western, be cast aside. It is only then that the Islamic voice may stand on its feet to truly send an Islamic message in an Islamic attire. This is the natural healthy course for anything to produce fruit, but it is preposterous to expect the comprehension of an Islamic concept when it is attired in a Western robe.

An outer dress deceives the eyes. One can not be Oriental or Occidental by a mere hypocritical outward appearance. How many Westerners have managed to penetrate into the deep secrets about the Arab world like Lawrence of Arabia or Richard Burton³⁰ by resort to the trick of appearing like an Oriental! But does that make him so! Is disguise that conceals true identity the means through which an alien is accepted into other people's cultures! It may work to deceive and achieve ends particularly if the opponent is gullible. This is where the shrewd Western mentality knows the weakness of an adversary who can be easily fooled into thinking that whoever wears an Oriental dress is on his side when in fact, he is a Western agent in an Eastern garb. Thus outer garments are not the criteria that decide the issue of social belonging. One can wear an Eastern dress when in fact, he is deeply immersed and thoroughly versed in Western thoughts and outlooks. An outward garment does in no way make one an Easterner unless this is the new updated version of the Oriental intellectual as we see in Aziz who has a Western head and an Eastern covering or mask, or who is internally a Westerner and externally an Easterner, which is then the essence of hypocrisy that the Islamic world in particular has to live up with. That does not exclude the West from this sin as it is the Islamic world's mentor in that respect. It has taught its catechism to the haunted East that speaks Western thoughts in an Oriental tongue of a '*gennii*' or '*afrit*'.

Similarly, an Islamic concept can assume Western trappings but it remains Western in essence. Thus the Islamic rendering of the declaration of faith and other terms to the West can never be interpreted in the way Muslim scholars see them. Language or rhetoric ironically widens the gap and creates the splits between the actual intended meaning and the one provided; and in that lies the misrepresentation. Language too fails to achieve its desired objective of bridging the cultural gap between the Islamic world and the West due to a failure to render a religious Truth in a clear and easily-comprehensible way. Hence the West's failure to understand Islam may be justified on grounds of its inability to comprehend Islam's basic tenets since such essential and significant words in Islam are erroneously rendered. All of the above does not in any way mean that the West is impeccable. It may well suit the West that Islam is misrepresented by its followers themselves which would in that case justify (*i.e.*, the West's) rejection of it as it is beyond comprehension as the translation fails to communicate fully.

The West is not illiterate in failing to know what true Islam is. In some areas, Islam is exposed to it in a way better than methods of representation utilized by Muslims themselves. Here we reach Foucault and Said on the strong link that exists between knowledge and power. Without the first, the West could not have been in a position to render Islam and Oriental cultures utterly powerless. The West is so naive as not to know the meaning of the declaration of faith. In fact, Forster reveals his profound knowledge of what correct Islam is as far as the purity of the Creed that reiterates the firm and unshakable belief in the Oneness of Allah is concerned. He says in chapter 35 where he starts with the story of the two shrines that these shrines are "worshipped by the few Mohammedans who live near, and by Hindu also ... When Aziz arrived and found that even Islam was idolatrous, he grew scornful, and longed to purify the place, like Alamgir. But soon he didn't mind like Akbar. After all, this saint had free prisoners and he himself had lain in prison" (p. 292).

Indian Rulers & Islam

This quotation sheds light on a number of issues. In India, as in many other Muslim countries, there are those known as '*Guburiyyoon*' meaning worshippers of buried saints and Waliis whose graves are erected within the mosque's precincts as Forster rightly says. In many parts of India, hardly a mosque is built without a grave in it. When Aziz enters the mosque early in the novel, his thoughts turn to building a mosque "and near it, under a low dome, should be his tomb, with a Persian inscription" (pp. 20-21). Indians perform this anti-Islamic practice in accordance with custom rather than belief. This supports the previous argument that Islam in India is more followed and respected as part of a culture. Strict observance of certain religious rules seldom happens or else no tombs would be allowed in mosques. Such a practice is indeed anti-Islamic as the prophet is reported to have said: "The most evil of mankind are those who will be alive when the Last Day arrives and those who take graves as places of worship"³¹. These people like the Christians have a high regard for those pious Waliis (i.e., intermediaries) believing them to intercede for them, answer their calls, grant their wishes and get them closer to Allah. Thus they have the firm conviction that they can reach Allah through these dead priests. According to the pure faith, that Forster is again not that naive to be in total ignorance of, the above practice contradicts the purity of the monotheistic creed that regards the above as Aziz rightly perceives as 'idolatrous'. By associating others with Allah, the whole concept of *Tawheed*, that is the belief in the Oneness of Allah, is negated. Those who seek to purify Islam of such erroneous conceptions that misrepresent Islam are known as '*Salafis*'. The word '*Salafiyya*'³² is defined by Sylvia Haim as "a return to the ways of the prophet, his companions, and the Muslims of the early centuries, when Islam was in its pure state and the Arab Caliphate in the heyday of its glory"³³. The '*Salafis*' are ironically the 'Fundamentalists'³⁴ who seek to purify the Creed, but the West, particularly its media, uses the term in a negative sense to link them with fanatics and extremists adding still more to the complexity of many entangled issues, blurring the dim vision of many Westerners and misrepresenting an Islam that cries for a true voice that neither the Muslims communicate fully as true Islam is suppressed nor the West is willing to receive or represent rightly. It suits it to keep Islam distorted.

Such a distortion is at times encouraged by the state as was the case in India where some of Mogul emperors, supposedly Muslims, directed their attacks at Islam. Jalal ad-Din Akbar founded his own religion known as "Din-e-Ilahi" which ridiculed Islam. His courtiers held Islam in contempt "as the religion of the nomads of Arabia". Akbar was greatly challenged by the revivalist in the subcontinent Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi (1563-1624) who defied the authority of the emperor and fought to revive Islamic law. His strenuous efforts eventually pressured the government to submit³⁵. Thus what Forster tells us about the way some of the Mogul emperors look at the issue with a mixture of derision and playfulness is an evidence of his familiarity with historical issues. Almagir, whom Aziz sees earlier in Chapter 14 as "the more pious", though he takes Babur to be his 'ideal' as he has never betrayed a friend in his life and because he "laid down his life for his son" (p. 142) catching the fever that has caused his death only to let his son survive, so Almagir has longed to purify the place and eradicate such anti-Islamic traditions, an action which is consistent with his apparent righteousness. But it seems that the Indian ruler lacks the strictness to erase such practices. He just winks his eye at it as if he has not taken notice of it and yet he pretends to be pious himself. Thus the power of State is therefore needed here to rectify a major Islamic mis-conception lest people put all different religions in India into one large melting pot where the obvious link between these common forms of idolatrous practices relates to raising the status of the dead *Waliis* to that of intercessors and mediators between the living and Allah. Thus slackening in carrying out the courageous initiative to eradicate such practices by the Mogul emperors and their lax approach to the whole issue has resulted in the continuation of such forms of worship. The irony is apparent as Akbar, who is "not a true Muslim" as he used to drink wine, and unlike Babur who "always repented afterwards ... never repented of the new religion he invented instead of the Koran" (p. 143) which is none other than a 'universal religion' that 'embrace(s) the whole of India' (pp. 143-44), has therefore done more harm to Islam by his secular approach than the poor grave worshippers and the like.

The above illustrates the clash between State and Religion. The Mogul emperors encouraged the existence of a false Islam and were opposed by the *Mujaddidin*, i.e., those who want to revive the true spirit of Islam and see true revival through a return to the purity of the Creed³⁶. Some other *Mujaddidin* see the present decline of faith as a result of the overtly influential role of the West to the extent that matters related to the creed and more precisely to the declaration of faith are at times challenged leaving many poor Muslims in doubt and even intellectuals in a state of hesitancy. According to Forster, Islam is losing its hold on people as this is evident in the evaporation of its message reiterated day and night through the loudspeakers of the minarets of its mosques. Such a message eventually "melt(s) in the mild airs of Mau" (p. 292). Islam, seen from a Western perspective here, is getting weak. The fact that the words that repeat the declaration of faith so essential to Muslims as they become the fine, delicate and yet sharp demarcation between Islam and any other religion, eventually melt, diffuse, evaporate and get blown away by their vibration that causes them to fade away, become fainter and fainter as a dim light that gradually disappears the farther the distance between it and the viewer becomes is an indication that the further Muslims are removed from the cen-

tre of Islam, the less religious and pious they become. Such a rule is more felt by Muslims than Europeans. One is struck at times that some Muslims who are born into the faith lead dissolute lives while those born in Europe lead righteous and virtuous lives. Faraway Muslims sometimes give a right picture of a modern believer with *Qur'an* in his heart, education and technology in his head, honesty in his hands and vitality and vigorousness all over the body of an athlete. They differ from Muslims brought up in an Islamic environment and who bear certain resemblances to Jacques' Justice in Shakespeare's *As you Like It*.

An Islamic Spirit of Revival

The strangeness and mystery of the whole issue lies in the contradiction that expects those closest ones to the cradle of Islam to be the most religious and the ones further away to indulge in pleasures: this is the irony of the situation. It proves that it is difficult to predict the direction from which danger directed at the West may come: from the ones born into the faith or the ones educated in Europe who have sophisticated mentalities and carry the enlightened brains of the lively and vital West! Whether we look at the impact of Islam on its followers in spatial terms or if it is viewed in a temporal perspective taking into account the inevitability of change with the progression of time, as the West perceives, Islam's impact is bound to get weaker and weaker. This is based on the analogy that its call for prayers eventually dies out in the infinite space that mocks its echoed words which turn to be hollow by virtue of their disappearance. If that is so, as far as Forster is concerned, the tendency is that with the passage of time and the increase in distance away from the cradle and heart-beat in Makkah, the chances are in favour of a future decline of Islam.

But while it is true that many Muslims in Europe face an identity crisis and have numerous problems to struggle with as they are at a distance from the cradle of faith, yet on the other side, there is a great hope that such Muslims are the saviours of the *Ummah* as they lead it out of its current stagnation and decline. Thus Halliday predicts:

If there is to be any hope of an intellectual and cultural breakthrough within the Islamic world, one that goes beyond the minority of brave, if at times imprudent, writers and thinkers who have always challenged doctrinal powers, then it may well come from the *Ummah* in exile ...³⁷.

What we therefore see in the West is both a negative and a positive sign of what may be regarded as the future of Islam. Pessimism comes from Forster's prediction that Islam is weakened as the call for prayer evaporates in the air. But simultaneously, it is getting stronger as Muslims in the West fear a loss of identity and thus they become a unified front that presses for more rights and asks for more freedom. A Muslim in the West feels at times a stronger need to assert his identity and stand firm in the midst of a turbulent Western culture. Even among students and some holiday makers, the chances of a cultural shock that forces them to recoil back to Islam out of fear of too much absorption of and exposure to a dangerous and materialistic civilization can be supported by evidences confirmed by active callers to Islam. For them the West is viewed as a fertile ground to spread Islam as they see the advantage of an exposure to an alien culture rather than its threat. They justify that it is advantageous for Muslims to be exposed to

Western culture on grounds that it is better for the Muslim individual to arrive at the conclusion that Islam is the solution by himself as Western culture, by contrast, destroys the spirit and creates confusion. Thus what happens to some Muslims in the West and what they see with naked eyes can be the reason for a nostalgic return to Islam.

A leader like Sayyid Qutb who travelled to America in 1949 and returned in 1951 was highly critical of a promiscuous American society so "primitive in (its) sexual life" and so biased against Arabs and so removed from religious ethics³⁸. A cultural shock can therefore bring a person closer to a better understanding, if not admiration, of his own culture. In Tawfiq al-Hakim's *Usfur min al-Sharq* (1938), Ismail's experience in England allows him the chance to be reconciled with his own culture from which he was initially estranged. He comes back as a more enlightened Oriental who looks more deeply into things and more with an open mind. Now he comes to realize that "There can be no science without faith"³⁹ and eventually his harmonious relationship with his original Oriental environment where he has experienced a cultural displacement is restored with his marriage to Fatima. Thus a departure from one's native land with a sense of dislocation may very well end with a reconciliation with and integration into the culture that becomes like skin, impossible to divest the self from. It is only by distancing oneself from the culture that one sees faults. Then one becomes aware of the faults of other cultures and alienation is replaced by a yearning to be part of the native culture that is discovered to surpass alien cultures.

The Biblical story of the prodigal son who departed from his home country where he led a dissolute life only to return with better chances for his moral reform has its analogy in al-Hakim's novella as a repeated pattern of alienation felt in one's own native land and then a reconciliation to that original environment is brought about through a removal or a departure which allows for a deeper insight and a more balanced perspective. A cultural shock resulting from an exposure to a different culture can be the instrument that brings about a better understanding of one's own. The initial feeling for undertaking the journey is that one feels that he does not "belong in the intellectual, social, and political milieu of (his) oppressive and crisis-ridden age"⁴⁰. But as Abrams shows, the circular journey which emanates from one's native land and ends with his return to the same place where he feels the displacement is performed with the intention to search for the true home where his identity can dwell safely and where he feels that he has finally discovered the right place where he belongs⁴¹. It is the self's desire to be well culturally placed that forces the expulsion out of a native land and it is the self's discovery that there is not a better place or haven than home that accelerates the drive to return. This may well explain why many Muslims have a better chance to become reconciled with the Islamic faith once they are distanced from it in Europe and contrary to Forster's assumption that Islam is weakened, it can be the turning point that causes Western anxiety and fear. With a distance from Makkah comes eagerness and desire to practice Islam while with a close proximity to the Sacred shrines of Islam, many can be lenient, careless and devious.

An Incorrect Prophecy

One therefore wonders if Islam, as Forster predicts, is becoming weaker or stronger with this spatial and temporal distance from the cradle of Islam. Now the call from the

minarets from the Grand Mosque in Makkah is transmitted live and dormant Islamic feelings of a connection to a remote centre are aroused. Does that call, as Forster claims, "belong to pilgrimages and universities, not to feudalism and agriculture?" (p. 282). The meaning behind the quotation is subtle and shrewd. Forster sets up a binary opposition here between various activities in life. Pilgrimage is a religious undertaking. Universities sharpen intellects and allow research to be carried out. How are these two lumped together unless we think of universities as religiously oriented which in England was the case until mid nineteenth century or thereabout! Nowadays, most universities give very little attention to theology in terms of instruction, and not in terms of research. This therefore explains that on one side of the scale, Forster places activities which are purely religious or have a religious element in them. On the other side, he has two secular activities related to land, labour, production as they have a hierarchial relationship between lord and vassal, between landowner and workers where the law has to intervene to regulate all above matters. Being anti-religious himself leads him to think in such a secular way as if he says that religion and politics are incompatible and thus should be kept apart. The first belongs to the Church and the second is regulated by the State that sets up its own laws and disregards the divine law that Muslims highly esteem as they see the inseparability of religion from the activities of daily life including economics, banking systems, laws for the family, marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption, dealings, commerce and education⁴².

What deserves a close scrutiny here is that by making the two above groups where Islam is claimed to be good and applicable to the first but impractical with the second, Forster is imposing his Western mentality on a purely Islamic issue as it remains beyond his power to pass a judgement on such complicated matters since they are beyond the periphery of his limited vision. Had Forster lived long enough, he would have seen that much of the agitation and conflicts in the region are due to a split between religion and politics and a secularization of everything including education and media as the two most important channels through which the greatest impact comes. Since Muslims see Islam as a whole system that organizes all aspects of life, and as they see the obvious split between faith viewed by secular intellectuals as a personal matter on the one hand and an application of Islamic Shari'ah meaning the divine law of Allah on the other, problems are likely to arise, and contrary to Forster's expectations, the Islamic declaration of faith in practicality is not getting weaker nor is Islam losing its hold on people's lives. The opposite is true as the West is aware of the spiritual drive of Islam that gains momentum as more people, whether erstwhile believers or new converts, join its fold. It is beyond the scope of this paper to probe into the causes but it should be clear that what the West really fears can come from one of two directions: the Islamic Fundamentalists who are dissatisfied with existing secular governments which bow down to the West in servility or Organized Muslim Minorities living in the West who have cultivated their talents and intellect in a way that they can compete with the West particularly if we keep in mind the fact that the West will go to any extreme to protect its security and remain as the *only policeman in the yard*. For that, it sends the Islamic world on another route just to keep it away from any possible meeting point.

Forster's prophecy that Islam is doomed to be in a weaker position in the sense that social change in Islamic countries will lead people to do away with religion as is the case in the West proves to be wrong since what is going on now attests to the reverse. Forster anticipates the decline of Islam with the passage of time in an imagery of slipping as if it is continuously falling downhill when he says: "The funny little thing didn't even stand straight, for the rock on which it had been put was slipping down the hill. It, and the shrine, were a strange outcome of the protests of Arabia." (p.293). The novelist is referring here to the mosque that has been visited by Aziz and his children after visiting the shrine. He may express his hostility toward Islam the way it pleases him, he may repeat his conviction that Islam is likely to lose in the long run, but his opinion does not mean that it will become true. In recent years, Europe is expressing deep concern over the rise of fundamentalism that the media links with terrorism and violence. This has led Clare Hillingworth to write under the title "Another Despotism Seeks to Infiltrate the West" that

Muslim fundamentalism is fast becoming the chief threat to global peace and security as well as a cause of national and local disturbance through terrorism. It is akin to the menace posed by Nazism and fascism in the 1930s and then by communism in the '50s⁴³.

Contrary to Western expectations, Muslims are becoming more and more convinced that correct and true Islam, and not a misrepresentation of it by Western media or Muslims themselves, is the only left solution for them. This is the reality the West must live with as more Muslims are utterly dissatisfied and disgruntled over the way Western policy is exercised over a wide section of the Islamic world with all its arbitrariness, unfairness and ugliness. Western double perspectives in recent years is as obvious as the sun under a clear blue sky. The more pressure the West places on the Islamic world, the more suppression will be felt inside until the people will not be able to take it any more. It is therefore feelings of injustice that breed animosity and rejection of the powerful like the colonizer in *A Passage to India*. It is also natural that the oppressed like Aziz will feel a natural antipathy against the oppressors. Just as it is impossible to arrive at a reconciliation between oppressor and oppressed in the novel, it is equally impossible for the Islamic world and the West to reconcile as the same feeling of injustice that simmers in Aziz's chest is shared by many Muslims today since they are fed up with Western exercise of power over a weak Islamic world. One therefore wonders how long the current situation can go on and how it can be altered!

Solution and Conclusion

The situation will not be altered unless serious attempts are taken to represent Islam in its true light and once both the Islamic world and the West are willing to hear the Islamic voice that has been suppressed and denied recognition for so long. As this paper shows, Islam is misunderstood by the West because in the first place, it is erroneously represented by its followers. The translation of certain Islamic concepts fail to communicate the Islamic message across to a different audience that should be addressed in such a way that Islam transcends "culture's untranslatability" and proves its universality and appeal to people worldwide. Muslims, are obliged to present the profoundly hidden,

though mysterious and inexplicable religious truth buried in the treasures of ancient scholars and in past lore in a lucid and comprehensible way not only to Murrin's special reader with whom the allegorical writer in *The Veil of Allegory* establishes such a specific relationship, but also to the whole West and for the entire world to see in broad day light. In that case, not only those who have been initiated into the inner truths of rituals and those who understand specific terminology will be addressed, but the Western mentality also so that it can grasp the simple meaning in a straightforward and accessible way. Muslims are therefore blamed for suppressing the Islamic voice which, contrary to Forster's expectations, is not evaporating in the air but rather becoming the vehicle through which Muslims are brought into the fold of Islam. Non-Muslims are attracted as Islam reveals itself rather than hides behind harem bars. Just as Forster observes the prayer performed in the open *Maidan*, Islam needs clarity and space to be seen and then be judged. It has to be given the chance to appear in its true garb and not under masks or in disguise and hypocritical shows.

But while this paper blames Muslims for unclear translations of certain Islamic concepts which may explain why the West fails to appreciate Islam, it does not free the West from blame as it deliberately at times distorts Islam. It perfectly suits its aspirations to retain stereotypical notions and preconceived ideas. Western media, for example continues to represent Islam in a negative way and the situation is not likely to change unless strenuous efforts are exerted to offer a more authentic picture of Islam whilst not mixing what Islam is with what Muslims do because Muslims misrepresent Islam. Their actions and behaviours cannot be taken as an excuse to blame Islam for things it is completely free from. Not until the West understands this separation between Islam and Muslims and strives to understand Islam in a new light will there be a possibility for the removal of the current ambiguity that exists in the Western mentality. Islam needs to be exposed right. It has to come to the surface before an explosion brings it up. Thus the paper calls for the dire need to remove sources of obscurity shrouding Islam and keeping it hidden like an Algerian lady of Alloula behind bars and windows with an apparent look of frustration and oppression. Genuine understanding of Islam, currently needed more than any time before, and serious efforts to represent it right both by Muslims and Westerners, are the safety valves that will ensure that no possible catastrophes, clashes or eruptions are likely to take place between the West and Islam.

The picture which Forster draws of Islam in the novel at the time when India was under British rule clearly illustrates the various misrepresentations of it reflected in anti-Islamic practices that run into opposition with the true spirit of the Islamic creed. But such idolatrous practices are encouraged by some of the Mogul emperors who enter into a clash with *Mjuaddidin* who seek to purify the creed and return to the original roots of the religion. But in spite of their efforts and judging from the novel, the Islam that existed in India then is only part of a culture needed to create a sense of belonging and offer a feeling of security. Islam becomes an integral part of traditions, customs and social norms rather than a religion that regulates daily affairs and applies to life. Aziz at times likes to hear his religion being praised. But his link with Islam is needed as an essential measure to preserve his identity. To that Islamic identity he retreats at times to derive

power and ascertain hegemony particularly in places where he is likely to feel secure under the protection of the roof of the house of Allah. But that security is temporary. The peace and strength Aziz experiences in the mosque are shattered just as the external strife exercises pressure on the mosque's 'ruined gate' and 'broken slabs' and proves that such a sacred place can only provide a 'limited asylum'. Thus Aziz's link with Islam is just as fragile as the construction of the mosque is. The privacy of a tranquil and heroic world inside the walls of the mosque are bound to give in to the struggle without. Islam is therefore confined within the mosque's walls as far as Aziz is concerned, though Forster's observation of it in the '*Maidan*' is wider. Once Aziz is outside his hermitage, he loses strength because in the mosque he is wrapped in memories and reminiscences over a heroic and splendid past. But when he goes out of this secure haven, he confronts a present where Islam does not belong or fit. The security Aziz derives out of an Islamic identity is dispersed once he faces the contemporary scene. He loses the fragile link with a great religion that he feels in his heart that it does not synchronize with the present. Aziz is therefore torn between nostalgic feelings for a splendid Islamic past and a revolt against that very past if India is to attain its freedom. Hence Islam emerges as a religion that impedes progress, hankers back to an ancient past and brings about stagnation. As Forster views it too, it is a rigid religion that ought to be brushed aside.

As Aziz hovers between acceptance and rejection of Islam as a religion, he comes finally to reject its various institutions like the purdah and polygamy as they belong to a past he attempts to divest himself off in order to live the present moment where his thoughts are devoted to the creation of an Indian nation and where he feels that Islam cannot help him in that regard for it pulls him back to the past away from the present moment he must live through. In his rebellion against Islam, Aziz's is transformed into a Westerner by mentality but a Muslim by countenance and birth. While "suspicion and belief could in his mind exist side by side" (p. 272), in the process of metamorphosis inside the brain from a Muslim to a Westerner, belief is utterly shattered to be planted by skepticism and suspicion of the applicability of Islam in his present predicament. His stage of hesitancy or what Bhabha calls 'in-betweenness' or 'hybridity' where he is pulled between polar opposites ends up by depositing him on the Western camp as his rejection of Islam is final. But that rejection that Forster shows in various ways does not necessarily mean that Islam is losing its hold on people. Contrary to such expectations and to Aziz's final assessment of Islam, Islam is becoming a force that poses a threat at the West. The speed with which it spreads and the spirit with which it is revived constitute a threat directed at the West. Indeed "Islam's resurgence in Muslim politics reflected a growing religious revivalism in both personal and public life that would sweep across much of the Muslim world and have a substantial impact on the West in world politics"⁴⁴. The West is therefore alarmed but it has to deal with Islam or combat it only to delay its inevitable eruption. Logic and common sense say that it is for the best interests of the West to deal peacefully with Islam and live with it rather than shun it and turn its back to it. To do that, the West needs to change its methods of representation of Islam. Muslims too have to represent Islam faithfully and accurately. Islam has to be allowed the chance to emerge. The Islamic voice ought to be recognized and heard if mis-

representations are to be eliminated. All of the above requires genuine understanding and a deeper look into sources of conflicts in an attempt to make a better connection between Islam and the West.

Notes

- 1) **R. Kessing**, *Cultural Anthropology: A Contemporary Perspective* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1981), p. 521.
- 2) *Ibid.*, p. 68.
- 3) **William W. Comfort**, The Saracen in The French Epic, *PMLA* 55 (1940), p. 628.
- 4) See: **Norman Cohn**, *The Pursuit of the Millenium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970).
- 5) In the same poem Byron asks why darkness has settled over this "fair domain?" (*The Giaour*, 61). Darkness in this case refers to Turkish rule and the 'fair domain' is naturally Greece. See *The Works of Lord Byron: Poetry*, ed. Ernest Hartley Coleridge, 7 vols (London: John Murray, 1898-1903) Or *Lord Byron: The Complete Poetical Works*, ed. Jerome J. MacGann, 5 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980-1986).
- 6) **Thomas Hutchinson**, (ed.), *The Complete Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley* (London: Oxford University Press, 1905), pp. 446-482.
- 7) Lodovico Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso*, translated with an introduction by Barbara Reynolds (New York: Penguin Books, 1975).
- 8) **Marshall W. Baldwin**, Western Attitudes Toward Islam, *The Catholic Historical Review*, 28 (1942): 403.
- 9) **E.M. Forster**, *A Passage to India* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979). Henceforth all page numbers are to this edition.
- 10) See: **Judy Mabro**, *Veiled Half-Truths: Western Travellers' Perception of Middle Eastern Women* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 1991).
- 11) Mernissi, for instance, sees the Hijab as a partition that separates between two opposed worlds: the private and public. See: **F. Mernissi**, *Women and Islam: An Historical and Theological Enquiry*, trans. M.J. Lakeland (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1991), pp. 161-187.
- 12) The *Qur'an* specifies the men in front of whom a woman may appear without the restriction of the Hijab in verse 31 of Sura XXIV (Nur). Others are considered strangers who should not be allowed into a private feminine circle.
- 13) See: **Homi K. Bhabha**, *The Location of Culture* (London & New York: Routledge, 1994), pp. 89-90 where Bhabha talks about the desire of the colonized to break artificial boundaries set up by the colonized. The book is referred to as *LOC* in the discussion.
- 14) G. Tillion offers a good discussion of Islamic arranged marriages and their objectives in *The Republic of Cousins: Women's Oppression in Mediterranean Society*, trans. Quintin Hoare (London: Zed Press, 1983).
- 15) I have borrowed the 'pull' and 'push' terms from Muhammad Anwar, *The Myth of Return* (London: Heinemann, 1979). Anwar discusses the reasons that force many Muslims to leave their home countries and what attracts them to the West.
- 16) Westerners think that the 'seraglio' allows Muslims to indulge in unlimited sexual pleasures. See Mabro, pp. 139 and 151 respectively. Norman Daniel draws attention to erroneous Western conceptions of the institution of concubinage as many Westerners seldom think that this practice is regulated by law, it is not a 'licensed promiscuity'. See: *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1960), p. 140.
- 17) See: **Sigmund Freud** on *The Interpretation of Dreams* in *Complete Psychological Works*, ed. James Strachey (London: Hogarth, 1953-74), vol. 5, pp. 612-3.
- 18) **Fred Halliday**, Islam is in Danger: Authority, Rushdie and the Struggle for the Migrant Soul, in: **Jochen Hippler and Andrea Lueg** (eds), *The Next Threat: Western Perceptions of Islam* (London: Pluto Press, 1995), p. 75.
- 19) **Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi**, *Muslims in the West: The Message and the Mission* (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1983), p. 133.
- 20) **Reuben A. Brower**, The Twilight of the Double Vision: Symbol and Irony in *A Passage to India*, in Mal-

colm Bradbury (ed.) *E.M. Forster, A Passage to India: A Selection of Critical Essays* (London: Macmillan Press, 1970), p. 117.

- 21) **Vasant A. Shahane**, *E. M. Forster: A Study in Double Vision* (New Delhi: Arnold Heinemann, 1975), p. 103.
- 22) **Safi ur-Rahman al-Mubarakpuri**, *AR-Raheeq Al-Makhtum (The Sealed Nectar): Biography of the Noble Prophet* (Riyadh: Dar-us Salam Publications, 1996), p. 392.
- 23) **M. Harris**, *Culture, People, Nature: An Introduction to General Anthropology* (4th ed.) (New York: Harper & Row, 1985), p. 114.
- 24) **Muhammad Sid Ahmed**, Muslim World between Two Fires, *Balkan War Report, Bulletin of the Institute for War and Peace Reporting*, No. 17, January 1993, p. 1.
- 25) After the massacre at Hebron Mosque, the following poem appeared in a Saudi newspaper named *The Saudi Gazette*. The poem is by Anne Fairbairn. Here it is in full:

Side by side in the mosque, Men of Hebron bow in prayer. In gentle submission, side by side. Soon the vicious hiss of death, Splits the pious soul of dawn. Struck down, the son of Adam screams,	"Oh murderer, oh man of hate, Take the burden of our sins, Take our shame with your own, To the shadow of the lost." Above this sacrificial floor, Above the dying and the dead, Beak bloodied with shredded flesh, Claws clutching a pulsating heart.
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- 26) **Muhammad Ali al-Sabuni**, *The Abridged Commentary of Ibn Katheer*, 2nd vol (Beirut: Dar al-Qur'an al-Kareem, 1973), p. 324.
- 27) **Malek Alloula**, *Colonial Harem*, trans. Myrma Godzich & Wlad Godzich (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1986).
- 28) **Lodovico Ariosto**, *Orlando Furioso*, (ed.) Robert McNulty and trans. John Harington (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), p. 5.
- 29) **M. Murrin**, *The Veil of Allegory: Some Notes Toward A Theory of Allegorical Rhetoric in English Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 58.
- 30) Among the books that describe life among the Arabs are Charles Doughty's *Arabia Deserta*, T.E. Lawrence's *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, Richard Burton's *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al-Madina and Mecca* (1855) and Lord Dunsany's play *The Tents of the Arabs*.
- 31) Quoted in Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips, *The Fundamentals of Tawheed [Islamic Monotheism]* (Riyadh: Tawheed Publications, 1990), p. 197.
- 32) 'Salafiyyah' was promoted by Imam Muhammad Ibn Abdul-Wahhab (1703-1798) in the Arabian Peninsula.
- 33) **Sylvia Haim**, *Arab Nationalism: An Anthology* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1962), p. 21.
- 34) See: **John L. Esposito**, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 7-8 for the negative connotations of the word 'fundamentalist' "often equated with political activism, fanaticism, terrorism and anti-Americanism".
- 35) **Syed Habibul Haq Nadvi**, *Islamic Fundamentalism: A Theology of Liberation and Renaissance* (Durban: The Centre for Islamic, Near and Middle Eastern Studies, Planning and Publication, 1995), pp. 42-3.
- 36) For a good discussion of Islamic movements, their objectives and struggle, see: **Esposito**, *The Islamic Threat*, pp. 122-133. See in particular, what Hasan al-Banna says regarding a possible change of the current decline of the Ummah, pp. 122-23.
- 37) **Fred Halliday**, Islam is in Danger: Authority, Rushdi and the Struggle for the Migrant Soul, in: **Jochen Hippler** and **Andrea Lueg** (eds), *The Next Threat: Western Perceptions of Islam* (London: Pluto Press, 1995), pp. 79-80.
- 38) **Gilles Kepel**, *Muslim Extremist in Egypt: The Prophet and Pharaoh* (London: Al-Saqi Books, 1985), p. 41.
- 39) **Tawfiq al-Hakim**, *Bird of the East*, trans. R. Bayly Winder (Beirut, 1966), p. 36.
- 40) **M.H. Abrams**, *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1971), p. 172.
- 41) *Ibid.*, pp. 190-92 where Hegel's 'Circuitous journey' or 'the spiral journey back home' is discussed.
- 42) Muslim scholars like Mawdudi see Shari'ah as an integrated homogenous whole. Shari'ah is not merely a system of a divine law, but a comprehensive code of behaviour that encompasses both private and public

activities. Thus it covers the whole system of life including the economic, social, political and educational spheres of activity. It further includes "religious rituals, personal character, morals, habits, family relationships, social and economic affairs, administration, rights and duties of citizens, judicial system, laws of war and peace and international relations" (p. 17). Thus the conflict between Islamic movements and State is due to the State's secular approach while leaders of such movements demand implementation of Shari'ah in all of the above. See: **Mawlana Abu Ala Mawdudi**, *Islamic Law and its Introduction in Pakistan*, trans. K. Ahmad (Lahore, 1970), pp. 17-19.

- 43) **Fred Halliday**, *Islam & The Myth of Confrontation: Religion & Politics in the Middle East* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1995), p. 185.
 44) **Esposito**, *The Islamic Threat*, pp. 11-12.

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صورة الإسلام من خلال رواية فورستر ! الطريق إلى الهند

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قسم اللغات الأوروبية وآدابها - كلية الآداب والعلوم الانسانية
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المستخلص . يهدف هذا البحث إلى تتبع الطرق المختلفة التي تعرض من خلالها فورستر تصوره عن الإسلام في روايته المعروفة الطريق إلى الهند ؛ وذلك لرؤية عما إذا كانت تلك الصورة تتفق مع النمطية والأفكار الخاطئة والمشوهة المنطبعة في المخيلة الغربية عن الإسلام ، أو أن هناك محاولة للانفصال عن المألوف والمتوارث . ويظهر البحث أن الصورة التي يبرز بها الإسلام الموجود في الهند أثناء الاستعمار البريطاني إنما هو جزء من ثقافة تعطي الأفراد شعوراً بالانتماء الاجتماعي لا على أنه دين قابل للتطبيق . ويظهر ذلك من خلال معالجة فورستر لكثير من الممارسات الدينية كالحجاب مثلاً ، فهو عادة اجتماعية في طريقها للتغيير الحتمي مع مرور الزمن . وبالتالي فالإسلام الذي يتصوره فورستر لا يتفق مع الحاضر لأنه دين مرتبط بالماضي الغابر ، مما يجعل عزيز يرفضه كدين لا كثقافة . وفي الوقت الذي يتبع فورستر ضعف الإسلام وانحساره حسب تصوره ، فإن الباحث يرى أن الواقع يحدث بخلاف ما توقعه الروائي ، حيث أن الإسلام يبرز الآن كقوة تلفت إنتباه الغرب وقد أتى ذلك نتيجة حتمية للصحة الإسلامية في كثير من بلاد الإسلام وحتى الغرب . ولذلك فإنه من الضروري تغيير الوسائل التي يصور من خلالها الإسلام . ويدعو البحث لتمثيل صحيح للإسلام من قبل المسلمين أولاً والغرب ثانياً ، وهذا ما يضمن إزالة سوء الفهم ، وخطأ التصور ، ويستبعد الخطر ، ويبيّن العلاقات ووسائل الاتصال التي ستمكن من فهم أوسع وتبادل أشمل بين الإسلام والغرب .